the measures until October 21, 1999 relating to the programmes of three US institutions namely the EXIM Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the Trade Development Authority (TDA). The US Administration also restored lending by US Banks and resumed their International Military Education and Training Programme (IMET). Further, on February 18, 1999, a World Bank loan for Andhra Pradesh Power Restructuring was approved with some G-8 countries voting for the proposal and others abstaining.

(d) Developing and strengthening of closer economic ties is an ongoing process, and holds a very important place in India's foreign policy objectives. The Government will continue to monitor and evaluate our economic ties with all countries, and to explore opportunities for promoting our trade and investment interests.

PM's statement regarding 'Lost Ground'

2537. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact as per P.M.'s statement published in press on 1st March, 1999, India treats POK, Siachin and 5000 sqr. Kms. ceded by Pakistan to China as "lost ground";

(b) if so, whether Government treat actual line of Control as Internal Border; and

(c) if so, whether this change means a change between Pokharan-Lahore visit of Prime Minister?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government are committed to upholding the Constitution of India. The unity and territorial integrity of India shall not be compromised. The Line of Control is not the international border. There is no change in Government's position regarding Pakistan's forcible and illegal occupation of a part of the territory of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Support of G-8 for suspension of World Bank aid to India

2538. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether G-8 its recent meet supported the suspension of the World Bank aid to the country, suspended since the nuclear test till India expresses its willingness to sign the CTBT;

(b) if so, what are the implications involved; and

(c) what is the reaction of Govemment with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) In June 1998, the G-8 countries indicated that they would not oppose the World Bank aid to India meant to meet basic human needs. Loans aggregating USS 1.245 billion to support seven such projects have been approved by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank since our nuclear tests. Recently two projects not classified as basic human needs have been approved by the World Bank Group. Some of the G-8 countries voted for the proposal while others abstained or opposed. Government is in touch with G-8 countries at various levels and the situation is being closely watched. The Government of India is taking all possible steps to obtain funding support to projects posed by us to different institutions.

Relations with Japan

2539. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHAND-RA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the efforts made to normalize relations with Japan owing to common security concerns?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): There is an ongoing dialogue, at various levels. This process commenced with my meeting with the then Foreign Minister of Japan (now Prime Minister) in Manila in July 1998. Both sides then agreed on the need for resumption of bilateral talks and continuance of private sector and people-to-people contacts. Subsequently, the Speaker, Lok Sabha, met his Japanese counterpart, during a transit halt in Tokyo (October 26); Shri I.K. Gujral, Chairman, Standing Committee on External Affairs met the Japanese Prime Minister, Foreign Minister